

BALE PROCESSOR

CROSS REFERENCE TO RELATED APPLICATIONS

[0001] The present application is a divisional application of application serial number 10/090,213, filed March 4, 2002, now US PAT no. 6708911

FIELD OF THE INVENTION

[0002] The invention relates to an improved apparatus for disintegrating bales of agricultural material such as hay.

BACKGROUND

[0003] Bale processors, including processors of the type having a tub with longitudinally disposed disintegration flail rollers and bale support rollers (as disclosed in Canadian Patent No. 2,086,569 owned by the applicant herein) are known. However, primarily due to the large size and weight of modern "square" bales (which have a rectangular configuration), problems may be encountered with operational flexibility and durability of some processors. Further, the majority of the processors known to the inventors are only adapted to process one type of common form of bale (i.e. "round" or "square") and are only adapted to discharge out of one side of the processor. Moreover, some known processors are not adapted for easy use with older tractors due to hydraulic feed line requirements exceeding the typical number of hydraulic ports on such tractors.

SUMMARY OF INVENTION:

[0004] It is an object of the present invention to provide a bale processor having operational flexibility and enhanced durability. According to a broad aspect of the invention, the invention provides an apparatus for processing baled crop material comprising: a chassis having a front and back end and a left and right side; a processing tub having two opposing end walls, two opposing side walls and a discharge opening located in one of the side walls; a disintegrator mounted in the processing tub adapted to disintegrate baled crop material positioned within the tub and discharge the processed bale material out the discharge opening; and a